



John Reich Journal

Volume 3/Issue 2/3

December 1988

JRCS

JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY
P.O.Box 205 Ypsilanti, Mich. 48197

The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States gold and silver coins minted before the introduction of the Seated Liberty design, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

The John Reich Journal is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and/or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the editor. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die varieties, die states of published die varieties, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc. Inquiries about specific varieties will be directed to one of the experts in that series. All correspondence should be directed to:

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John Reich Journal

Official publication of the
JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

As I start these comments, it is just after Thanksgiving and I am typing this on my new computer. I finally splurged and bought a WYSEpc 286 Model 2108, an IBM AT clone. For the computer buffs who may not be familiar with the WYSE name, it has 1 meg of RAM, a 20 megabit hard disc drive, 5.25 and 3.5 floppy disc drives and operates at 8MHz. I bought it as an entry level computer, which is compatible with my new IBM ps/2 80 at work. Its best selling point is that it can be upgraded with an Intel based 80386 CPU. After I learn my WordPerfect editor, I will hopefully be able to do most of my writing and keyboarding at home. This text will be my first test of computer compatibility; i.e., can I take a document done at home to work, translate it to Unix format at work, and print it out on my Fortune system Laserjet printer? (It worked, but!!!)

My August birthday was the big FIVE OH (50th), and I have embarked on a minor fitness improvement program. I take a one hour aerobic class twice a week and try to workout on my rowing machine, whenever I can manage it. Trying to keep fit just adds to the demands on my time.

As you are all well aware of the lateness of this issue, I hope you also noted that I have labelled this issue Vol.3 No.2/3. I know it was mailed in January 1989, but I don't want to look as bad as I feel about this. If we are ever going to get the **JR Journal** back on schedule this has to be the first step. The next issue of the **Journal** will be Vol.4 No.1. My plan is to publish at the end of March. I can just imagine some of you chuckling at my statement. Just remember, only you can determine how large the issue will be.

1989 membership donations are now due. Renewal form should be enclosed. Those members who have joined since September 30, 1988 are paid up through 1989.

For all of the members who wrote about the expected June issue of the **Journal**, I apologize to any who did not get a written response.

It is obvious that I am having great difficulty in maintaining timely publishing dates. If there is anyone, among our readers, who will take over as editor, I would gladly relinquish the job. Any volunteers? I do not intend to abandon **JRCS**, I would just like to spend more time doing my own research, and writing. I have started several articles in the last couple of years and never completed them. This has been frustrating. My job has also taken up so much of my time that I find it hard to get any Journal work done at work.

However late this issue is, I think it is almost worth the wait. There certainly is something for everyone. I am limiting my comments in an effort to include as many articles as I can, in the 40 pages of this issue.

In addition to the above mentioned article, I have two half dollar articles, a computer article, and a promise of an article on half eagles for the next issue. SEND ME SOMETHING TO PRINT. Someone volunteered to send me some fillers, i.e., the little blurb on page 38, to fill up the last page of an article, that doesn't conveniently end on line 48.

There was a lot of correspondence about the last issue. Keep it up. We really want to know what you think, pro or con, about any article. I never dreamed the article on the Overton Supplement would generate so much interest.

The BLEVINS SALE: REPORT AND COMMENTARY article on pages 19-27 isn't as timely as when it was written, but I think everyone will still enjoy it. The importance of the sale is the fact it seemed to add real impetus to the ever growing interest in early U.S. Halves. Mr. 104's desire for a complete die variety collection, and a deep pocket, has driven the price of major rarities to heights hardly imaginable a year ago. He definitely shook up a lot of Bust Half Nut Club members. And it wasn't just a one time event, as high prices have continued in the subsequent sales. I hope some of you will send in your experiences and results, with the Norweb III Sale. It would be nice to learn where most of the proof halves went.

There seems to be an increasing number of collectors chasing the nice EF to AU halves. Don't hesitate too long when encountering coins with character. Now may be the 'good old days of the 1990's.

For the members who are waiting to see a half dime census, their wish begins on page 35. Any members wishing to participate in the 1794-1807 half dollar census must get their data in ASAP.

To add to the controversial 'E' & 'L' counterstamps issue, I quote from Stack's T. Henry Allen Sale 2/77, Lot 256; "1815 An 'E' is incused above the head. These counterstamped pieces (also with an 'L') are rather common. They exist in the years 1815, 1818, 1819, 1820. Why they were struck remains a numismatic mystery." Can anyone counterstamp a coin without flattening the reverse?

There is one advantage to only two issues of the **JR Journal** for 1988. The people who complain about the difficulty of selecting the top three articles have fewer choices. One of our members suggested that serial articles (such as Winter's Dollar Series) be combined for voting. Either way, send in the votes for your three favorites before March 15th.

Several members have mentioned the long delays in receiving their membership cards. I will see what I can do about improving the situation. The Treasurer reported we are in the black, but the final balance for 1988 will be compiled after the bills for this issue are paid.

DAVID J. DAVIS

PLAUDITS, PANS, AND PERPLEXING POINTS

I thought I'd better drop you a line after reading the latest **JR Journal** Vol.3 No.1, article on the 1964 Overton Early Half Dollar Die Varieties - A Supplement. I have had one since 1965. I got it from Al Overton. I think Al only had 100 books made as he was selling them to all of the people who bought the Beistle reprint from him.

Mike Marker



I can add a little information on Al Overton's 1964 Early Half Dollar Die Varieties - A Supplement.

Al held his 38th Mail Bid Sale April 3, 1959. Listed for sale was his personal collection which included many die varieties not found in Beistle. Basically, his descriptions of the unlisted varieties in the sale are the same as the ones that appear in the "Supplement". He used both Beistle and his own O. numbers in the sale to describe each lot.

I will list below some of Al's estimates and the prices realized in the sale. You can now start to cry.

		Estimate	Sold
1794 B. 1Aa	Choice VF	225.00	275.00
1796 B. 1aA	VF	1250.00	1350.00
1801 B. 1A	Practically Unc.	225.00	185.00
1802 B. 1A	EF	150.00	125.00
1807 O. 2	50/20 similar to B. 10G in choicest condition Brill. Unc.	100.00	111.50
1808 B. 2bBa	Brill. Unc.	60.00	50.00
1809 O. 1	Brill. Unc. Gem	40.00	33.50
1815/12 B. 1aAa	Almost Unc.	150.00	140.00
1817 O. 5	Semi Proof	75.00	60.00
1818 B. 7G	Brill Unc.	20.00	18.00
1819 B. 111	Brill. Unc. Frosty Gem	20.00	18.00
1822 O. 1	Brill. Unc. Frosty Gem	20.00	15.00
1824 O. 3	Brill. Unc. Gem	20.00	16.50
1827 B. 18M	Brill. Unc. Choice	15.00	12.00
1828 O. 7	Brill. Unc.	11.00	8.00

And the list goes on.

Don Gunnet

I, too, own a copy of Al Overton's supplement. In response to your call for information on the supplement, I wrote to the well known book dealer, Cal Wilson, and asked him for any information that he might have. After all, I obtained the supplement along with the first edition of Al's book in Cal's January 1987 mail bid auction.

In his usual most helpful manner, Cal answered my letter promptly and in great detail. I think you will find an excerpt from his letter of interest. Part of his letter reads as follows:

"With respect to the Al Overton supplement, I too am a member of **JRCS**, and also read David's article on the subject. Actually I have handled the supplement on numerous occasions over the years. Back in the 1970's, it seems like just about every copy of the first edition Overton had one of these tipped in. As a result, I generally just sold the book without mentioning the added piece. I guess I simply assumed that Mr O. must have included the work with each purchase of the book. In retrospect, that probably was not a correct assumption, as recently encountered samples seldom contain the supplement. Still, I don't believe that it is particularly scarce. One of our local dealers once had a fairly good supply of them in his book stock. I recently asked him if he still had them, and he said that he gave most of them away with sales of the last Overton reprint a few years ago."

Cal further added:

".... I would guess that more than a few collectors will respond to David's inquiry, advising him that they, too, have the supplement."

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to write me. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. By the way, the **JR Journal** has been simply terrific. Keep up the good work. I hope to finish an article in the near future on the usefulness of Al Overton's first edition on the various die states double profiles and other die characteristics that the second edition has left out.

Chuck L. Louie

I enjoyed David Davis's article on Al Overton's 1964 Early Half Dollar Die Varieties - A Supplement. Just a brief rundown on my association with Al Overton. I had started collecting bust half dollars in 1963 and as most bust collectors that were starting didn't know what the Hell he was looking for or looking at. I had some bust halves I could not attribute, so my wife and I were going to Denver and Colorado Springs in 1967, I took the coins along. I called Al Overton when we got to Colorado Springs. We spent a day and evening with

him. We discussed many coins. When we were leaving he presented me with his 1967 edition of Early Die Varieties of U.S. Half Dollars 1794 - 1839, autographed (Best regards to Ralph Murphy - Al Overton). Also, the 1964 Supplement. After that, we always kept in touch.

I had known Dr. Pat Patton from the time he published his book on bust half dollars. I purchased one of the first ones that came out. There still are a few of his coins at some of the coins shows around the Pittsburg area.

In 1970 my wife and I went back to Colorado Springs on vacation. We took some bust halves with us and called Al Overton, again. We spent another part of a day and evening with him. We discussed a lot of coins and when leaving he presented me with an autographed copy of his revised 1970 edition and the transition table.

I heard by the grapevine that Al Overton's son or son-in-law is doing some research on bust halves. He may be coming out with some more information on bust halves. Have you heard anything about this?

When we lost Al Overton, we lost, in my estimation, one very knowledgeable numismatist and one prince of a person.

Ralph J. Murphy

Re. The Overton Supplement you mentioned on page 20 of the April 1988 issue of the **JR Journal**. I have a copy as part of my library. I believe it came tucked in under the cover flap of my 1967 Overton book, when I purchased the latter. It is true that the Supplement is mentioned in the "Forward" of the 1967 book; more significantly, however, turning to the copyright page of the book, one finds the following text:

"A revision and enlargement of Early Half Dollar Varieties a Supplement. Copyright 1964 by Al Overton."

Thus the 1967 Overton, which I always thought of as the 'original,' is actually just a greatly expanded version of the Supplement, which now must be considered the 'original!'

I first started collecting Turban Halves about ten years ago, stopped for a period of six years, and recently have had my interest rekindled. I left the hobby partly because of business pressures, but largely because of some disappointing experiences I had bidding for coins by mail at auction (from major houses, too).

In order to avoid a repetition of these bad experiences, I want to improve my knowledge of grading halves, primarily in grades of AU-55 through MS-65, which are my main collecting interest. Would you have any suggestions as to how to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills? The last issue of the **Journal** contained much useful information on this topic, but I need more.

One final question in this already too-long letter: Is there a book devoted to Capped Bust Halves, which focuses not so much on die varieties as Overton did, but on the history, design, beauty and romance of these coins? If not, someone should write one.

William P. Bengen

Re. The Patton (Bust Half Dollar Major Die Varieties) and pre-Overton Overton (Early Half Dollar Die Varieties - A Supplement) article in the **JR Journal** Vol.3 No.1. Back in the late sixties there was an old-timer named Wurtz or Wirtz who used to come around to the local 'Greenhills' show with what must have been a "Patton." He carried it rolled up in his pocket. Frankly, although I sold type, I did not do varieties (then) and I could never figure out what in the Hell he was doing studying my bust halves against his little manuscript It had a grey or light brown cover, as I recall. Apparently, no one I know in this area knew the guy, and he may be deceased by now. I have never seen or heard of the Overton supplement.

I think Downey's article on Market Pricing of Bust Halves was excellent. A lot of the new(er) collectors and 'investors' don't understand that there seldom is a Bust Half which is truly Unc. Fivaz is also absolutely correct in his recognition that AU-58 is the where-it's-at grade.

Would it be possible for you to include a "tear-out" page which is an application blank for new JRCS members, as other club publications sometimes do? It would greatly expedite signing up new members.

It is nice to see an article like Neil Morse's showing at least a recognition of the "service-intensive" nature of catering to the type/variety collector. But you're not going to hear dealer complaints from the collector-dealers who learned a long time ago that if we do our homework and know what we are talking about when we offer coins we'll earn the respect of the collector and subsequently his business Plus, when all the investors and their slabs have flown the coup, the collector will still be out there buying coins.

Paul Padget

Congratulations on another excellent issue of the **JR Journal**. The information is very helpful to me and, I am sure, to many others. Although I collect mostly bust halves, I am really starting to enjoy the other articles more and more.

The main reason is that I get to thinking about working on the road in 1978. One weekend I drove to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to a coin show, to sell some silver. The dealer who bought the silver had an 1811 AU bust half for sale, and it really caught my eye. It was beautiful, except for three adjustment marks in the left field. I think I paid too much for it, but the more I looked at it the more it mystified me. Where had it been and who had had it for the last 167 years. Since then I've bought and traded for many more and each one fascinates me just as much. I wonder if that dealer had had a bust dime, a quarter, or something else what I would be collecting today.

A tip to collectors. I found, while attending coin shows, that often the dealers with two to five bust halves in their case, usually don't handle very many and will sell all of them for one lump sum - usually very reasonable. It saves me time checking Overton varieties with people hanging over me. I think the dealers appreciate it also. I check the varieties when I get home and sell or trade my duplicates. I almost always come out ahead, collection-wise and dollar-wise.

Bust half problems; One problem I have been having lately is the width of the dates on halves. On a few coins, for instance, I am measuring 9mm but the variety might be listed in Overton as 8mm or 9½mm. Everything else matches perfectly, maybe it's me.

The other problem (kind of the same) is very often I will have a bust half that matches an Overton number perfectly, except for one thing. It may be the arrows touching instead of a ½ mm apart, or the shield lines inside the shield when they should be extending through, or the T-I is far apart when they should be in line with each other. Has anybody else had this problem or is it me? I realize that there are obviously varieties not listed by Overton, but these coins are so close!!!

T. Craig Heibel

In response to William Atkinson's article on 'double profile' bust halves; In checking my halves, I found the following varieties: 1823 O-104, 1824 O-108, 1825 O-102, O-105, O-107, O-108 and 1830 O-102 (which were) not listed. The 1825 O-107 is doubled from the top of the bust to the eyebrow, with doubling about ½mm to left of LIBERTY. He might be interested in this information.

Van Harvey

(The following letter was received after my response to an inquiry about what series would I recommend for a new collector. I suggested Capped Bust Half Dimes, as there is little competition, they are readily available in any condition you can afford, and it is likely to be the most fruitful for new varieties and rarities. Of course, new finds will, subsequently, reduce some rarity ratings. Because he inquired about half dollars, I also put him in touch with a local collector who was knowledgeable about bust halves. - Editor)

Thank you for your recent advice and information on JRCS. I decided to follow your advice on a collection of Capped Bust Half Dimes. First I acquired a copy of Valentine's book, read over the material, and then went searching. I went to a local coin dealer and asked if he had any half dimes. There was a nice 1829 VF-20. I decided in favor of the purchase and left the store feeling good about my first half dime. When I returned home I went straight for Valentine's book - and to my surprise and satisfaction - it was a V-5 variety with an R-7 rarity rating! A dealer friend told me to take the rarity rating with a grain of salt. Maybe the variety isn't that rare (I think my friend may be jealous), but the find still brings a lot of satisfaction. In any case, I am off to a great start.

I contacted Mr. Erb and we had a good, long talk. There is much I can learn from him and finally I have found someone who is willing to take the time to share knowledge and teach me about numismatics. I think after talking to Mr. Erb I may still consider trying to assemble a complete Overton variety collection. I look at it as a challenge, but also realistically; I am young (22 years old) and I will be going to medical school in a year. So overall, I may have many years of collecting ahead of me, and probably money will not be a problem in the future. A complete Overton variety collection is a formidable lifetime endeavor, but it is possible and well worth it. I am patient and hard-working. Maybe that may not make such a collection a reality in the end, but the joy of collecting is what it's all about - and that's the bottom line.

I wonder what I would do with such a collection if it ever became a reality? I would really hate to sell it (probably couldn't bring myself to do such a thing). Maybe it would be the beginning of the BHNC museum! Who knows, we will just have to wait and see.

J.M.T.

I recently purchased an 1834 B-1 bust quarter with the reverse rotated about 35° clockwise. The value "25 C" is also recut up slightly - a characteristic I had not heard of before for this variety.

Scott G. Grieb

The reason for my interest in **JRCS** is an increasing interest in collecting by die variety. I certainly find this to be more rewarding and involving than slabbed, grade - rarity, date - and - mintmark Morgan Dollars and Liberty Walking Halves. As I'm sure you can appreciate! The boredom of 'Commercial' numismatics lead me to EAC, the most visible die variety club, and by way of Overton and Breen's books to LSCC and **JRCS**.

My specific interest in joining **JRCS** was motivated by the purchase of an 1834 O-113 and an O-114 with some puzzling anomalies. My curiosity in which came first is now full blown.

I would be interested in knowing of any research on 1834 O-113 and O-114.

I hope the above provides some background on the how and why of my interest. I look forward to receiving the next issue of the **JR Journal**.

Craig B. Sholley

I've had books and notes on my desk since the first 'E' and 'L' quarter counterstamps article in the **JR Journal** Vol.2 No.3. Including:

U.S. Gold Coins, Vol. II, Quarter Eagles, by Akers.

Trial List of Countermarked Modern Coins of the World, by Duffield

"Red Book" - 41st Edition, by Yeoman.

Varieties of U.S. Quarter Eagles, by Breen.

American and Canadian Counterstamped Coins, by Brunk.

Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins, by Taxay.

Auction catalogues from Bowers & Others, Stack's and Superior.

All in preparation for a statement re. U.S. quarters C/S with 'E', 'L', etc. - not to decide what they stand for but the phrase "C/S while still in the dies."

It first struck me when reading about the 1848 quarter eagle with the 'CAL' C/S on the reverse. Almost every mention says "while still in the dies."

I say **BALONEY**.

1st. Almost always the obverse die is the upper die - the reverse the lower die. If this were true in 1848, the dies would have been removed from the press - placed on a workbench, the coin on top of the reverse die - then struck.

In the case of the quarters the die could have remained in the press but I suggest there would have been no room for the punch and the hammer.

I believe - I suggest - they were removed from the press and struck on a bench. What do you think?

Stew Witham

Since joining **JRCS** little more than a year ago, I have found innumerable pleasure in reading the excellent articles in the **JR Journal**, searching dealer's stock and bourse floors for varieties, and corresponding with several fascinating and learned members of the Society. Variety collecting, particularly of half dimes, and sharing information with fellow collectors, has easily become the most fascinating and enjoyable facet in all of my experience in numismatics.

Two of my recent finds might be of interest to fellow Capped Bust Half dime enthusiasts. An EF-45 1831 half dime, purchased through a mail bid sale by a noted early U.S. silver specialist, arrived unattributed as to variety. It quickly became a curiosity, as it was the one of my bust half dimes that I could not readily attribute, with some degree of certainty, per Valentine, using Jules Reiver's excellent Variety Identification Manual. I tentatively attributed it as V-5, but it lacked any trace of the diagnostic reverse die crack (from A1 to beak) as described in V-5a and V-5c. Additionally, N1 was not filled, per V-5b. there was an interesting die scratch (straight line, in relief) on the reverse, from the tip of the leaf, through the left wing, and into the field.

Mike Conroy, of Numismatic Attribution Service, in Portland, Maine (**JR Journal** Vol.3 No.1, pg.36) concurred with the V-5 attribution, but suggested it might be a very early die state, before development of the reverse die break from edge through A of STATES and ribbon to the eagle's beak, described by Valentine as V-5. This coin, and the following, has been submitted to Jules Reiver for his comments and observations. Such an early die state, should it be confirmed, might warrant revision of the die state progression (V-5, V-5a, V-5b, V-5c, and now V-5d) in the pending revision of Mr. Reiver's VIM.

A significant find surfaced at a recent local coin show while studying a small accumulation of perhaps a half dozen relatively low grade 1835 Capped Bust Half Dimes. These coins were neither graded nor attributed by the dealer, lacking even the simple description Large or Small Date, Large or Small 5¢. Because of the average grade of only VG, I nearly passed them by, but elected, instead, to pull out my notes and books and attribute them at the dealer's table. One of these proved to be V-8 (Large Date, Large 5¢), R-7 according to Jules Reiver. It exhibited the detail of F-12, but an obverse rim nick at S2 rendered it

a value of VG. Although my attribution notes differed slightly from Reiver's reverse location numbers, the extremely right positioning (9) of the right end of the scroll, under the center of M, is the only Large 5¢ reverse die that seemed possible. This, along with several other diagnostics (M defective, N1 filled, RI touch, A1 above T3), seemed to confirm V-8. Mike Conroy, of NAS, again confirmed my attribution. This coin, also, has been submitted to Jules Reiver for his learned observations.

It is both exciting and intriguing to know that any patient and persistent student of the series can realistically expect to be rewarded for his efforts with such significant finds. Presumably, the rarity rating (R-7) of this variety will be amended downward with confirmation of this find, but the coin is hardly common by any standard, and holds a special place in my collection. Having suffered the anti-climax of completing a 'Red Book' collection of the fourteen varieties of Bust Half dimes, my collecting interests have been renewed with the knowledge that potentially every half dime encountered is a needed variety.

Stephan A. Crain

With reference to Wm. Atkinson's article (**JR Journal** Vol.3 No.1) on "Double Profile" Bust Halves, I would like to add some additional ones: 1812 O-107 VF-30, 1818 O-111A VF (double struck obverse side only), 1823 O-107 EF-40, 1824 O-101 F and 1825 O-115 VF.

The (other) articles were really interesting. I think the article by R. Neil Morse **hit the nail on the head**. I have gone through the same experiences. I agree with the Editor's comment, "Neither dealer nor collector can get along with the other." I also believe the collector needs the patience, endurance and goodwill of the dealers.

The comments on the counterstamped 1815 and 1825 bust quarters throughout the last two issues of the **JR Journal** have been both interesting, intriguing and amusing. I tend to support the theory that the various counterstamp punches were used as Mark Hotz pointed out for the screw press adjustments to improve strike and appearance of the quarters. In other words these letters were for the Mint and were codes applied for the method used or applied in their production. I am afraid this enigma will be with us for a long time.

In response to W. Ellis's question on pg.5, "Has anybody ever suggested to BHNC members to review their coins and make note of the 'T-I' and 'D-E' relation?" I have used my own system of the T-I relationship for 18 years or more for many of the tough years to attribute, i.e. 1827, 1830, 1831, etc. It is similar to the T-I table that JRCS #17 put in one of the past issues (Vol.2 No.1). When attributing, because of other characteristics of many varieties, I feel it is not necessary to have a T-I relation for every variety. It is still necessary to check the OBVERSE and other parts of the REVERSE of the coin.

C.N. Erb

BUST DOLLARS; AN UPDATE FOR 1799
(continued from Vol.3 No.1)

1799

Mintage (All kinds): 423,515

NOTE: Exact mintages by variety unknown.

- A. 1799/8 overdate.
 - 1). 13 reverse stars (Bolender-1, B-2)
 - 2). 15 reverse stars (B-3)
- B. Irregular Date, final 9 too low.
 - 1). Normal arrangement of reverse stars, 13 reverse stars (B-13)
 - 2). Abnormal arrangement of reverse stars, 13 reverse stars (B-15)
 - 3). Abnormal arrangement of reverse stars, 15 reverse stars (B-4)
- C. Normal Date, 13 obverse stars arranged 7 X 6.
 - 1). Five berries (13 varieties)
 - 2). One berry (B-11)
 - 3). No berries (B-12)
- D. Normal Date, 13 obverse stars arranged 8 X 5 (B-23).

The 1799 is the most common individual date of the entire Bust Dollar type. While a number of die varieties and/or subtypes are legitimately rare, enough coins have survived (approximately 7000-8000) to satiate the appetites of type collectors and specialists.

We have arranged this date into four major varieties. The irregular date coins were, undoubtedly, struck first. They were followed by the overdates, normal dates (stars arranged 7 X 6) and, finally, by the enigmatic 8 X 5 stars coins.

Attribution is much easier than for 1798 but may still present problems. To determine the die variety of a specific coin, we suggest that the collector first establish which 'major variety' the coin falls into. The most difficult of these is the normal dates with five berries. We have listed, whenever possible, certain major die characteristics for each of these varieties which should, in turn, make attribution easier.

Offerings of Extremely Fine or even About Uncirculated 1799 dollars are not unusual. Strict Mint State specimens are, of course, rare. The great majority offered as such will display light 'cabinet friction' or rub on the high spots. A choice Mint 1799 dollar is truly very rare and will easily command a solid five-figure price when - and if - offered for sale.

Bolender-1. 1799/8 overdate as are the next two varieties. 13 reverse stars; die breaks above and to the left of the I in AMERICA. The lowest curl is very weak and the centers are always found softly struck. In the lowest range of R-5 but very rare in About Uncirculated and extremely rare in Mint State. The finest pieces to be sold in recent years were Stack's Amon Carter: 224, B & M's Garrett II 10/79: 690 and 1975 ANA: 907. Late die states show die failure at RIC in AMERICA and, eventually, a shattered reverse: cf. Pine Tree 9/74: 1012.

Bolender-2. 1799/8; 13 reverse stars. Readily distinguishable from B-1 by its reverse break through the curve of the D in UNITED. The obverse shows some new die flaws in and around the date and between S7 and the L in LIBERTY extending to the hair above the ribbon. There is a bar, on the reverse, in the cloud below the E in STATES which may be the remnants of a mispunched letter. Many pieces show irregular denticles and weakness of strike on the bottom curls. High R-4 but of similar rarity to B-1 in higher grades. The finest known appear to be Stack's 4/75: 159, ex Scanlon: 1719, Miles: 1544 and B & M's Fairfield: 1032, On late die states, a die break runs from the bottom of ATES in STATES up through OF to the tip of the right wing to the top of the rim above. Roughness in the die is sometimes present around the ER in AMERICA. Like B-1, this variety is prized by type collectors. Both are a bit overrated in lower grades but are, as previously mentioned, extremely rare in high grades.

Bolender-3. 1799/8; 15 reverse stars. The reverse is the result of a blunder by the engraver who, subsequently, tried to efface his mistake by enlarging the clouds. His attempt at camouflage was not entirely successful as the bottom points of the extra stars can be seen at the far left and the far right clouds. The D in UNITED is recut and there are die flaws in the right side of this letter. High R-4 and of similar rarity to B-2 but much less rare in Extremely Fine or better. Approximately 10-12 pieces are known which grade at least EF-45. The finest of these appear to be Stack's 5/74: 230, 1975 ANA: 912, ex Gilhousen: 1248 and Pine Tree 9/74: 1013. Austin: 25 was catalogued as "Uncirculated" but was riddled with many small nicks.

Bolender-4. Irregular date with the first (too far left and the second 9 too far to the right; reverse of B-3 with 15 stars. Quickly identifiable by its reverse and by its having a point of the 13th star touching the bust. Specimens are known with both perfect and cracked dies. High R-5: extremely rare in Extremely Fine or better. The finest known appear to be NN 57th Sale: 1070 and Gilhousen: 1249, ex Merkin 9/68, Ostheimer and Austin.

Bolender-5. Normal date; the U in UNITED is imperfect at its upper left with the thick part cut off by a slip of the engraver's hand. The reverse is similar to B-16 but can be easily distinguished. On B-5, the upper stars on the right have two points which touch clouds. On B-16, the upper right star has only one point which touches a cloud. At least two die states later than Bolender's 5a are known. On the first, there is a reverse die crack from the eagle's beak through its left wing to the rim and then to the D in UNITED where a retained cud forms. On the second, there is a die crack from the lower right corner of the A and second T in STATES, through the clouds to the upper right serif of the first A in AMERICA up to MERI and to the rim. This extensive die crack is very rare. R-1 and one of the most common varieties of the year.

Bolender-6. Same obverse as B-5, B-7, B-10 and B-11; this die was reground and then used to strike B-17. Usually found weak at the centers. High R-5 but not as rare in high grades as one might anticipate. At least three Mint State pieces are known; 1975 ANA: 919, ex Gilhousen; 1251, Austin, Bolender and a Lyman Low sale of 1918, the T.J. Clarke/Col. Green piece and another coin in an eastern collection. Late Die States show, first, an obverse die crack at the bust point through the last three stars to the rim. The latest state has reverse die cracks - cf. 1975 ANA: 919 and 920.

Bolender-7. A slight difference in this reverse was noted by Bolender who wrote "the top of the 1 in (the) date is refinished and straight cut." R-4 but extremely rare in Extremely Fine or better. B-7a is of similar rarity. An exceedingly rare late Die State with a shattered and buckled reverse is known - cf. 1975 ANA: 923.

Bolender-8. There are a number of die characteristics for this variety which were not mentioned by Bolender. The obverse displays unusual fancy letters in LIBERTY. There is a die chip outside star 9 on the obverse; star ten is recut and S10 and S11 are too close. On the reverse, the N in UNITED was, initially, cut upside down and then corrected. R-2 overall; High R-3 as the B-8a subvariety and R-6 as the B-8b subvariety. In the latest Die State, the reverse stars are very weak. Mint State examples include Baldenhofer-Bolender-Guttag and the Ostheimer-Baldenhofer-Rumbel coins.

Bolender-9. The "apostrophe" variety, so called due to a die flaw after the second S in STATES. R-1 and the commonest variety of the year. High grade pieces are, however, very rare and underrated. Perfect Die State coins are known but extremely rare. The latest Die State coin show the obverse shattered; this state is, as well, extremely rare.

Bolender-10. R-2 but extremely rare in About Uncirculated and apparently unknown. Early Die State coins may not show the obverse die crack through S11-S13. Bolender-10a and 10b subvarieties are somewhat scarcer than the "regular" B-10 and are as described by Bolender.

Bolender-11. The U in UNITED is defective at its upper left corner, as on B-5. There is one tiny berry on the reverse; late Die State coins have a reground reverse die and no berries may be visible. High R-4; extremely rare in about Uncirculated and unknown in full Mint State. The finest known coins appear to be the specimen in the 1973 ANA, Kagin's 315th Sale: 367 and Bareford: 416, ex 1949 ANA, WGC. Die cracks unmentioned by Bolender include one at the eagle's lower beak and shield and another which runs through UNITED to the arrow butts.

Bolender-12. R-1 and one of the commonest varieties of the year. A distinctive type coin as it is the only variety of 1799 Dollar with no berries. The finest known appear to be the double struck J.C. Brown: Gem and Scanlon: 1720, which is ex Dibello. Some examples are found with raised irregular edges - cf. 1975 ANA: 943. Bolender-12a and 12b subvarieties are both scarce; the latter is invariably found in low grade.

Bolender-13. Irregular date. Die rust at E in STATES; the upper two berries are closest and the bottom two berries are very large. All seen are weakly struck at their centers. This variety was struck from a leftover die dated 179__; the 9 was added in 1799. High R-7, possibly Low R-7; of the few known pieces, three are About Uncirculated while the rest display extensive wear.

Bolender-14. A number of additional die flaws, unmentioned by Bolender, are present. On the obverse, a small flaw is present near S8. On the reverse there are a number of flaws between the F in OF and the wing tip as well as another below the D in UNITED. All examples are weakly struck on the hair. R-4; extremely rare in Extremely Fine and apparently unknown above About Uncirculated.

Bolender-15. Irregular date; reverse of 1798 B-24 with five small berries. Significant as the only 1799 Dollar with an "abnormal" pattern of stars on the reverse. Most seen have weakly struck stars. High R-5; there are three or four AU's known but no strictly Mint State pieces are accounted for. The late Die State specimens show a die break downwards from the end of the stem.

Bolender-16. R-1; one of the more common varieties of the year and obtainable even in About Uncirculated. The only two strictly Mint State pieces appear to be Merkin 10/66: 307 and Amon Carter: 225. B-16a is quite common; B-16b is scarce but not nearly as much so as claimed by Bolender.

Bolender-17. The reverse has the largest berries of any variety of 1799 Dollar. An incused die mark at the upper left corner of the farthest left cloud is present on the early Die State; the second S in STATES is recut at the inside lower loop. All seen are weak at the centers, especially on the obverse. R-2 but very rare and underrated in high grades. The finest known appears to be NERCA 1/82: 725. The Bolender-17a subvariety shows a number of die dots and flaws in and around the shield. The latest Die State has die cracks at OF, IC, A to the D in United to the wing, ST, from the rim at 6:00 o'clock through the eagle's tail to the arrow butt and, finally from the rim to the second berry between the I and C in America.

Bolender-18. The reverse die break described by Bolender is a most efficient aid in identifying this variety. The first three stars show light repunching; the U and T in UNITED are recut. A few pieces are known with some degree of reverse die rotation. Low R-6 and very rare above Choice Very Fine; apparently unknown in Mint State. The finest known appears to be Austin: 27, ex Terrell. Perfect die coins exist but are extremely rare. Late Die States show a heavy die crack below the left wing tip through STATES and the O in OF to the rim below; a second crack begins at the rim over E in STATES and it then meets the die crack through ED as described by Bolender.

Bolender-19. Reverse of 1799/8 B-2 with the same die crack through the D in UNITED. The obverse is invariably quite weak as are the reverse stars. R-6; rare and underrated in all grades. No pieces are known which grade above Extremely Fine.

NOTE: No B-20 variety exists.

Bolender-21. The obverse is similar in appearance to B-18 and B-19; identification is simplified by the reverse which reuses the 1799 B-14 die. This reverse now shows additional flaws in and around STATES. The second star on the obverse is recut and the obverse shows die rust which becomes extensive on the late Die State. High R-4; one or two known in Mint State but still quite rare in higher grades.

Bolender-22. There is a distinctive bisecting die break on the reverse which runs from the right side of the E in UNITED through the lower part of the eagle's neck to the left side of the M in AMERICA. R-6; almost always seen in low grades and rare even in Very fine, only a handful of Extremely Fine coins are accounted for. The late Die State shows the obverse rapidly breaking out and, finally, shattering - cf. Pine Tree 9/74: 1028.

Bolender-23. The obverse stars are arranged 8 X 5; this is the only 1799 with this peculiar arrangement. The reason for this configuration is unknown. It may have been a blundered die. Or, perhaps, and engraver might have accidentally punched the 8 stars after just having cut a die for an Eagle. He would have been forced to complete the die using only five stars on the right. The reverse die was first employed on B-16 and then, after being reground, it was used on the B-12 "no berry" reverse. R-4; very rare in high grades and, as one might expect, in great demand as a type coin. The finest known appear to be Quality Sales 9/73: 476, Amon Carter: 226, the Bowers and Ruddy 12/75 coin and the Brand, B.G. Johnson, Clarke piece. On the Late Die State, there is an obverse arc die crack from the first star to the thirteenth star running across the eagle's neck.

Doug Winter

PLAUDITS, PANS AND PREPLEXING POINTS continued.

In **JR Journal** Vol.3 No.1, Chuck L. Louie raised a question concerning a Bust Half 1814/3 O-101. I have an AU-55/57 specimen. There is no die crack under the date. The die crack starts at the edge by the bust, runs through stars 1-6 across the cap and ends at S10. There are no clashmarks. The die crack is light. The left wing of the eagle is flatter than the right and shows light wear. I find the left wing to be weak on almost all bust halves. I hope this information is of some help.

T.E. Matheson

Just a quick note to inform you of a new bust quarter variety. It is an 1836 with a B-4 obverse and a B-1 reverse. John McCloskey looked at my coin and agrees with the attribution. The obverse has all of the die cracks of B-4, but the crack near the date is more extensive (stronger). The reverse has the die crack seen at D STAT of B-1. I will write an article for the next **JR Journal**.

The **JRCS** meeting at ANA went very well. It was good to meet so many collectors interested in bust material. I miss that out here in Colorado.

Bob Spangler

THE BLEVINS SALE: REPORT AND COMMENTARY

Prelude

The sad news of Woody's death came in May of 1987. A serious collector for only seven years, Herman Woodrow 'Woody' Blevins still had time to gather many friends in the numismatic community.

Shortly after Woody's passing, Jules Reiver and Emmett Stanley visited with representatives of the family and the bank that would handle the disposition of Woody's collection. Within a few months, Superior Galleries of Beverly Hills, California expressed its pleasure in having been selected to offer Woody's collection at auction. The sale was set for June 5-7, 1988, immediately following the prestigious Long Beach Coin Show. Superior, of course, had handled the sale of Robinson S. Brown Jr.'s magnificent large cent collection (September 30, October 1, 1986). The plaudits Superior received for publicizing, cataloguing and presenting Robby's collection undoubtedly influenced their being selected.

Woody's collection was significantly different from Robby's. Although each collection contained many scarce die varieties, the superb condition of Robby's large cents far surpassed the quality of Woody's bust halves and dollars. Larry Goldberg confided that he harbored significant reservations respecting the economic wisdom of accepting Woody's consignment. Collector appreciation for Superior's efforts will probably repay the Goldbergs with important consignments in the years to come. (Jack Robinson has already consigned his personal large cent collection to Superior.)

The Catalogue

Superior retained Doug Winter to catalogue Woody's pieces. Jules Reiver assisted, providing useful, though occasionally controversial, information respecting the current rarity of Flowing Hair and Draped Bust half dollars. Rarity indications for the Capped Bust series, 1807-36, were those of the Bust Half Nut Club. (April 1987 Supplement to Al Overton's Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794 - 1836 Revised Edition.)

Doug checked attributions, described and graded the pieces. Larry Goldberg finalized the grades. With no consignor pressure, Larry demonstrated his ability to accurately grade bust half dollars. "I didn't want any returns on this sale," Larry said. Larry also provided the 'estimates' which Superior regularly incorporates in its catalogues.

Once again Larry was purposefully conservative. He explained why the estimates were so low: "If a bidder is prepared to bid more than a cataloguer's 'estimate,' he is more likely to attend or participate in the sale. European auction houses have followed this practice for years."

Historical Perspective

The Blevins auction promised to be a milestone in the history of bust half dollar collecting. Over the past 25 years Stack's has auctioned several notable collections of early halves. The R.E. Cox (1962), R.L. Miles (1969), Alto (1970), Reed Hawn (1973), James A. Stack (1975), Robison (1982) and George F. Oviedo, Jr. (1983) sales each contained significant groups of high quality bust half dollars. None of these collections, however, were assembled by die variety enthusiasts. Not since Carl McClurg's collection was sold (Bowers & Ruddy, Getty Sale, 1977) had there been a truly significant offering of bust halves by die variety. Before 1977, F.C.C. Boyd's collection (Numismatic Galleries, "World's Greatest Collection," April 14, 1945) may have been the only well publicized sale of bust half dollars by die variety. (All were attributed to M.L. Beistle's 1929 Register of U.S. Half Dollar Varieties and Subvarieties.)

Many of today's most dedicated collectors caught the bust half bug after the sale of McClurg's collection. Others boycotted that sale because of unpleasant controversy within the Bust Half Nut Club. (Carl was a BHNCer, but offended some club members when he shared information with the auctioneers which some thought to be confidential.)

Woody's collection included 32 of the 42 Flowing Hair varieties (1794-95); 3 of 4 Small Eagle Draped Busts (1796-97); 55 of the 58 Heraldic Eagle Draped Busts (1801-07; and 441 of the 450 Capped Bust varieties (1807-36). Many subvarieties and duplicates augmented the collection.

The Sale

With the issuance and mailing of the catalogues in early May, the stage was set. Bust half collectors prepared to assemble, in person or by agent, in Beverly Hills on Sunday evening, June 5, 1988. Several arrived a day or two early, to view lots and take in the Long Beach Show. Pre-sale comments centered on the low grades and problems that plagued a majority of the pieces. The real interest lay with ten or so very rare pieces in Woody's collection: 1795 O-101; 1805/4 O-103a; (buried in a group lot {No. 3060}); 1806 O-122, 124, 126 and 127;

1827 O-124 (also relegated to a group lot {No. 3468}) and 137; 1831 O-120; and 1835 O-115. Gentlemen's wagers were placed on which piece would bring the highest price. I leaned toward the '95-101. My roommate for the weekend, Virginia collector Gerald Schertz, warned of the charisma attached to three of Woody's Supplement pieces - the two 1806's and the 1831. (Since I had two 1806 O-127s in my pocket, I hoped Jerry was right!)

The auction began at 6:00PM. Julian Leidman took his customary seat in the front row, carrying bids for a dozen or so collectors. My bid book held the offerings of nine more collectors. Stu Keen stationed himself in the front row, but seemed to be bidding strictly for his own account. Dealers Emmett Stanley, Larry Briggs, Jim O'Donnell, Gene Sanders and Robert L. Hughes also took their places. Several well known bust half dealers choose to skip the sale. I shared Dave Olmstead's (Alpine Numismatics) thought, that publicity attending the sale must have reached 90% of the bust half collectors in the country. A dealer who outbid his customers would have little chance to resell his purchases at a fair profit. It would soon be apparent that not all dealers shared this view.

The Bust Half Nut Club was represented by Schertz, Richard Pugh, Larry S. John, Glenn Peterson, Don Parsley (Al Overton's son-in-law) and, perhaps, others who escaped my notice.

Auctioneer Mark Goldberg ran through the conditions of the sale and called for bids on lot 3001, a 1794 O-101 half dollar in VG condition. It sold to the floor for \$1800 (plus 10%) against a mail bid of \$1300. Three and a half hours (and 558 lots) later the final lettered edge half dollar was hammered down. Here are the highlights of the sale.

Flowing Hair Design, 1794-1795

Woody's collection lacked the tough 1794 O-102 as well as the prohibitively rare 108 (2 known), 109 (unique) and 110 (2 known). The difficult 1794 O-107 was skillfully plugged, accounting for its apparent bargain price of \$575 (to Briggs). The remainder of the 1794's brought prices commensurate with standard retail price guides. Then came lot 3011, a lovely VF 1795 O-101. Fewer than ten pieces are known to be in collector's hands, perhaps only five or six. The book opened at \$1200 and bidder No. 104 raised his paddle. So did several others, including Julian Leidman. When the bidding reached \$6,000 it became a two man battle. Julian paused at each increment, before nodding assent to requests for further bids. "No. 104" kept his paddle anchored upright. When the bidding reached \$9,000, Julian bowed out. His

customer would have to wait for another day. Amid gasps and murmurs Mark Goldberg remarked, "And he (No. 104) never flinched."

The remaining 1795's sold at standard levels, none exceeding a hammer price of \$1350. "No. 104" picked up three other 1795's. Jerry Schertz "completed" his Overton set of 1795's, including the tough O-123. Though Jerry lacks the O-118 and 132, so does everyone else. Many collectors doubt that these varieties exist. (Your writer would love to hear from anyone who owns or knows of someone who can confirm the existence of either die marriage.)

Draped Bust, Small Eagle, 1796- 1797

No rarities here, just expensive type coins. The 15 star 1796 O-101 (F-12, but heavily cleaned, with unattractive surfaces) brought \$15,000. (Add 10% buyers commission to all hammer prices quoted here.) The 16 star 1796 O-102 (lightly cleaned Fine) sold to the floor at \$16,000. The 1797 O-101a (choice Fine) brought \$18,000. The scarcer 1797 O-102 was lacking from Woody's collection.

Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle, 1801-1807

Woody had ten 1801's, including three O-102's. (Lot 3055 was misattributed as the more common O-101.) Only one 1801 graded VF (lot 3054). Larry Briggs bought four of the lower grade pieces at reasonable prices. Lot 3060 (\$2300) was a group of nine pieces which included one notable rarity, a colorful, though suspiciously toned 1805/4 O-103a in VF.

The 1802's and 1803's were mostly F-VF and sold at retail levels. The 1805's were highlighted by a scratched 1805/4 O-103 (lot 3073, VG-F, \$625), a badly damaged 103a (lot 3074, \$260 to Briggs) and two 1805 O-104a's (lot 3076, cleaned F-VF, at \$900 to "No. 104;" and lot 3087, a 2 piece lot containing a lovely Fine O-104a, "stolen" by BHNCer Richard Pugh for \$280).

Then came the 1806's. "No. 104" simply overpowered the opposition. He started with an attractive 1806/5 O-101a (lot 3090: F-12, \$650), pushed forward with an 1806/5 O-104a (lot 3094: VF, but bright and hairlined, \$850), paused for the common 1806 O-109a (lot 3100: Fine, \$190), picked up another common variety, O-120a (lot 3120: Fine, \$150) and then bludgeoned his competitors with bids on the rare 1806 O-122, 126 and 127.

Overton rated the 122 an R-8. Superior (Reiver?) suggested R-4. Since only 7-8 pieces are known, R-7 seems more reasonable. Woody's

piece was a fairly attractive VF, with light cleaning lines. The book opened at \$600. Up went a host of paddles. Only "No. 104's" was up when bidding reached \$6,250. More sighs, gasps and murmurs.

The popular, but overrated 1806 E/A O-124 (another Overton R-8, but now R-5 or so), brought \$2,700 against a book bid of \$750. (Lot 3125, F-VF, to Jim O'Donnell.) Another formerly scarce variety, O-125, sold for \$675 (lot 3126, polished VF). "No. 104" rested, gathering strength for the upcoming Supplement pieces.

A wry smile crossed Mark Goldberg's face as he glanced at the estimate of "\$250 up" before asking for bids on lot 3128, the 1806 O-126. The piece was VG, exhibited the usual cleaning lines and was marred by a depression in the planchet, above T in LIBERTY. Six or seven examples are known to collectors. The book opened at \$550. Julian Leidman raised both eyebrows: Gene Sanders propped up his bidder card and leaned back; "No. 104" nailed his hand to the wall, bidder card attached. Other aspirants raised their paddles. Julian lowered his eyebrows somewhere in the \$4,000-5,000 range. Gene resumed normal posture at \$5,000, and deftly flicked his paddle down when "No. 104" bid \$6,250. It was over: \$6,875, with "juice!"

No time to contemplate. Lot 3129 was next, 1806 O-127: a strong VG-F with nice toning and just a few hairlines. Nine pieces known, including the two in my pocket (see accompanying story on page 30). The book opened at \$775. Same scene, players and result: \$6,250 to "No. 104."

The 1807's were anticlimactic. Most were low grade, with an assortment of problems. They sold for \$150 or so. A nice VF 1807 O-103 (lot 3132) did bring \$575 in spite of several light scratches.

Capped Bust Half Dollars

There are no scarce die marriages among the 1807's. The one truly rare subvariety (O-111) was missing from Woody's collection. The O-111a, a scrubbed VG-F, brought \$160 (to Briggs); the "bearded goddess," O-111b, a pleasing though lightly cleaned F-VF, also went to Briggs, at \$480. Dealers bought most of the remaining 1807's. This is a popular date with Red Book collectors and difficult to locate on bourse floors.

The O-110 is the only scarce 1808 (R-5). Woody's example was an early die state, without the die break through star 7. It was recovering from an old cleaning and was closer to VF than the catalogue grade of VG. Stu Keen bought it for inventory at the bargain price of \$250.

Another undergraded 1808, O-103, VF-35, brought \$460. The coin was a flashy EF-45, one of the few high grade, no problem coins in the sale.

Woody had all seven of the tough 1809's: O-101, 104, 108, 110, 112 113 and 114. The 108 and 110 are R-4's; the remainder are legitimate R-5's. None approached condition census quality, although a low end EF would qualify for several of these marriages. Jules Reiver corrected a misattribution snafu in his own collection when he picked up the O-101, a scratched G-VG, for \$300. The equally tough O-104, a heavily cleaned VF, opened at \$240 and sold to Briggs for \$850. "No. 104" bought lot 3179, the O-107a for \$460 (VF, but cleaned, scratched and recolored). Did he care (know) that this "subvariety" is the product of loose dies and not truly a die state? (See Jerry Schertz' article, "A Screw Loose in 1809," Vol.2 No.3 **JR Journal**.)

The 1809 O-108, a decent F-VF, went reasonably at \$95. Woody's only high grade '09. the common O-109a was a nicely toned choice EF (with a bushel of well concealed vertical hairlines). It sold for \$950, to "No. 104." The O-110 was an awful coin. It went to the book at \$55. Briggs took aim at O-112, 113 and 114 and bought them all. All were undergrade one level because of their inherently weak strikes. Each was cleaned, with minor problems. They brought \$180 (O-112, Fine), \$160 (O-113, VG) and \$320 (O-114, VF).

The 1810's and 1811's were an unremarkable group of low to mid-grade coins. They sold at expected levels. "No. 104" picked up the only scarce variety, 1811 O-113, R-5, VF with massive hairlines beneath attractive toning: \$420. The 1812's included the charismatic 1812/1 Large 8, O-101 low R-5, a generally pleasing VF. A BHNCer picked up the piece for \$3,000 against a book bid of \$2,850.

The 1813's and 1814's were of little interest to die variety collectors. Several went to mail bidders. Stu Keen nabbed the 1814/3 (lot 3264), a pleasing VF-EF for \$195. Lot 3267 was a controversial 1814, O-101 with five "attenuated" stars on the obverse from 10:00 o'clock to 12:00 o'clock." Since the "attenuated" stars were incused most of us did not believe the piece was entirely a Mint product. It sold to Briggs for \$300. There were five 1815's. All but one sold to the mail, including lot 3280, a bright heavily cleaned EF, at \$2,550.

No R-5's punctuated the offerings from 1817-1819. (Woody never found, or was able to purchase, the 1817/4 O-102 or 1817 O-104.) The nicer of four 1817/3's, an EF (lot 3285), sold to the floor at \$550. The scarce 1817 O-108, R-4, brought only \$65 (VF). Low grade, problem filled examples of the 1818 O-110, 115 and 1819 O-106 (all R-4's) went

to mail bidders (\$45 to \$60). One of the seven known "plain edge" halves appeared in lot 3335, an 1819 O-109 (cleaned, weakly struck Fine). A collector picked it up for \$235, far less than many expected.

The 1820's (3rd lowest mintage) brought good prices: \$160 to \$230 for EF's and \$65 to \$105 for VF's. The scarce 1820 O-107, R-5, a homely VG, sold to "No. 104" for \$420. A VF 1821 O-107, R-4, with pinscratches went to Stu Keen at \$75. Keen also bought the 1822/1 O-101, a cleaned VF-EF, for \$210. The much scarcer 1822/1 O-102, R-4, a VF with scratches, sold to the mail for only \$55. The very tough 1822 O-103, sold to Briggs at \$190 (pleasing VF, with light tooling next to the date).

The major rarity highlighted the 1823's. Lot 3401 presented the 1823 O-109, R-6, Fine, with digs and scratches on the reverse and heavy hairlines. Leidman was successful, at \$750, for a client. The 1823 O-102 (a problem coin) and O-106 (R-4's) sold at \$50 and \$145. Woody did not have an example of the 1823 O-113, R-7. He did have one of the two or three finest known 1824 O-114's, R-5: choice AU, with lots of flash and eye appeal. With several bidders in the fray over \$1,000, it was hammered down at \$1,400. Another example in F-VF sold for \$210. The very scarce 1824/1 O-102, high R-4, G-VG, brought \$250.

Woody also lacked the 1825 ("Supplement coin") O-118, R-7, but did have the 1825 O-104, 109 and 117. The 104, R-4, F-VF, went cheap at \$60. The 109, R-5, a heavily cleaned G-VG, brought \$380 from a collector. And the 117, R-4, choice VF sold for \$210. Woody had all the 1826's. His O-103, R-5, was a lovely AU and certainly within the condition census. It went for \$1,300, nearly five times the "estimate." The somewhat less scarce 1826 O-115, low R-5, was a satisfactory VF and sold for a strong price, \$460.

Forty-six of the 49 1827 die marriages were next. (The 1827 O-127, 148 and 149 were missing.) Briggs picked of the first of several R-5's, a choice VF O-116, for \$500. The bargain of the sale, perhaps, was lot 3468 which included a R-3, R-4 and two R-5's: 1827 O-120, 121, 123 and 124. (Your writer expected to pursue the lot for inventory, but was asleep at the switch.) The pieces were low grade, but sold for only \$250. The 1827 O-122, another R-5 (cleaned F-VF), sold for the same price to a mail bidder. It took \$230 to pick up the single-lotted O-123, a cleaned VF. Then came the scarcest 1827 (outside of the two Supplement pieces): the 137, R-6 (15 or so known). The coin was a no problem VF. "No. 104" trotted out his hammer once again: \$4,000. The very tough O-144 and 145 were paired in lot 3476: \$625 for both. Very reasonable for the two VF's.

All the 1828's were in group lots, save the two R-5's, O-105 and 123. The former, a pleasant F-VF with light reverse scratches, brought \$240. The slightly tougher O-123 was a solid EF and a early die state to boot: \$1,150 to, you guessed it, "No. 104." The 1829 O-102, R-7, was absent. As there are no other really scarce 1829's, all were in group lots. The underrated 1829 O-106, R-4, was put with three other pieces (lot 3492, \$290 to "No. 104"). Woody also lacked the 1830 Large Letters, O-114, R-6. His O-111, R-2, was notable for its grade and originality. The EF/AU piece brought \$360.

Most of the common varieties from 1830 through 1836 were placed in group lots. The 1831 O-120, high R-6, was a cleaned, unattractive VG. Most paddles dropped out at \$2,000-\$3,000. Two or three competitors carried on until "No. 104" again prevailed: \$5,250. The final "Supplement" coin, 1833 O-115, R-5, was a lightly cleaned VG-F; sold to a collector for \$1,150. Stu Keen picked up the popular 1836 50/00 O-116, a hairlined VF, for \$180. The final R-5 of the sale, an 1836 O-121, went to Larry Briggs at \$750 (cleaned Fine).

Post Mortems and Commentary

Several BHNCers huddled outside as the sale turned to Woody's early dollars. No one claimed to have anticipated the levels at which R-6's or R-7's would sell. Had "No. 104" artificially inflated prices? Hardly, there was an underbidder on the floor in every instance, just one increment behind.

As I reviewed the 40 or so lots purchased by "No. 104," I realized that he had shown no interest in several rare marriages that Jonathon Kern had purchased over the preceding six months, at strong prices, from dealers and collectors. Jonathon, apparently, had been the only dealer carrying "No. 104's" want list. "No. 104" turned out to be an agent. He explained that his client preferred to maintain his privacy. A couple of BHNC members politely encouraged "No. 104's" client to contact them. The club's census information and the opportunity to draw upon the selfless wisdom of the club's elder statesmen are invaluable to die variety collectors.

The Blevins sale taught us that half dollar variety collectors have left their infancy. Their numbers are significant. Knowledge and appreciation of truly rare die marriages is widespread and no longer confined to the Bust Half Nut Club. Premiums for the R-5's to R-7's were commensurate with those routinely paid by large cent collectors. Bust half collectors whose roots date to Beistle or to the publication of Overton's first edition (1967) were, in general, more surprised by the prices paid for rare marriages than those who started their collection this decade.

The sale was a showplace for the "law of supply and demand," untainted by the usual specter of undisclosed reserves. Those who insist that prices were too high are criticizing a buyer's knowledge; Why pay over \$1,000 for a low grade 1833 O-115 when two or three are "Cherried" every year? Are the 1806 "Supplement" pieces worth nearly \$7,000 when new examples are appearing regularly? Is the 1812/1 O-101 worth 5 to 7 times other low R-5's simply because it's a Red Book coin?

The answers to such questions are what make horse races, and what make coin collecting an exciting and enjoyable hobby. So congratulations to all who participated in the Blevins sale. Whether you were successful or disappointed, you learned something and, better yet, wasn't it fun?

Sheridan Downey III

* ANNOUNCEMENT *

Upon the occasion of my joining the **John Reich Collectors Society**, I would like to announce the formation of a new service for those who collect or deal in early U.S. coins. I have established an attribution service that I believe will be of interest and value to **JRCS** members. Looking at the April issue of the **JRCS Journal** Vol.3 No.1, I see that someone else has started a similar service, which was detailed in that issue. My service is slightly different and has some other advantages.

I will attribute all half cents, large cents, all dimes 1794-1891, bust quarters, bust halves, bust dollars, Morgan dollars, Fugio cents, and the colonial coinage of New Jersey, Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut - any series for which an authoritative reference work exists. The service charge is only \$3.00 per coin, and there will be no charge for any coin I cannot attribute. This is considerably less than the fee charged by the other service. All coins will be returned within a week. Customers pay return postage and insurance costs. The most current estimated rarity will be listed for each attributed coin. All pertinent information for each coin will be listed on an insert that fits conveniently in 2X2 plastic flips or paper envelopes. If possible, coins should be sent in this type of holder.

For further information, I can be reached at the listed address and phone number. I have many years experience both as a collector and working for a well known nationally respected dealer. I have been the sole attributor for a major mail-order business for the past four and one half years. I am a member of the ANA, FUN, CSNS, MSNS, and now **JRCS**. Thanks for your attention.

Jim Ehman

Die Variety Attribution

P.O. Box 21790

Lexington, KY 40522
(606) 254-9993 evenings

CAPPED BUST HALF DOLLAR SECRETS; THE SHIELD

"If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts he shall end in certainties."

Francis Bacon

1561-1626

Occasionally I have placed a bit more than my foot "out on a limb," so to speak. This article will deal with just such a subject.

While it is a truth that I have a very strong opinion about this forthcoming theory, I would like to say that I have never seen anything good come about from a weak opinion.

In this light, for the betterment of understanding Capped Bust Half Dollars (and other Capped Bust denominations), I wish to take a risk and, once again, journey to that very limb.

Part of this article has been excerpted from the Capped Bust Half Dollar book manuscript on which I have been working for the past several years. Please consider the following:

Before detailing the theory, let us quickly review a couple "supposed" facts. In the preparation of the MASTER reverse die, numismatic specialists have long assumed that the central device (eagle and shield), was one piece and finished. I am not referring to the arrows or olive branch, but strictly discussing the eagle and shield. I am quite sure that this assumption is incorrect, and I do realize that old suppositions die very hard.

My theory is that the MASTER reverse die consisted of eagle alone and not the shield as seen on the coin. The shield area of the MASTER die was raised, but devoid of any vertical or horizontal crossbar engraving detail. That being the case, the hub made from the MASTER would have this flat area incuse. This, in turn, would make the area raised on the working dies. Then, and ONLY THEN, the lines would have been engraved into each individual working die before the die could be put to use. To my knowledge there are no Mint records indicating this, but I would further like to relate a few points which led to my conclusion, then you can be the judge.

On the reverse shield detail, of the Capped Bust Half series, many errors took place. This is one of the areas used by Overton to attribute the reverse of a half dollar, as to specific variety. All are slightly different under magnification. Some show lines crossing lines, the so

called filled lines (these areas were accidentally removed with a graver), or lines running out into the feather detail in the wings of the eagle. If this area was individually engraved on each and every working die, as I believe to be the case, then this would at once and for all explain the differences in shield detail. Why else would there have been so many differences in shield detail? I have discussed this with several advanced specialists and most all agree that this theory is the only logical explanation. I state that much consideration has been given to the thought that the horizontal crossbars were "touched up" or recut on the working dies and that this may have caused the many differences. However, this hypothesis has been proven inaccurate through the use of extreme high power magnification.

Another point worth mentioning is the fact that the vertical lines were engraved first and then the horizontal lines were engraved. This is proven by looking at the area where the vertical lines meet the flat horizontal line. Many times, a vertical line goes underneath the horizontal lines (going too far with the graver), but never does a horizontal line go underneath a vertical line. After all, the engraver knew that he did not have to be too careful at the top of the vertical lines because he was going to "cover it up" with the horizontal cuts. This proves that there was a "standardized" method of engraving the shield, on the working dies.

Anyone who is familiar with the striking process knows that the center of a coin is the hardest area to strike up. This is because, as the dies come together, the metal from the planchet flows out from the center of the planchet towards its edges. This same principle would apply to the making of the hub or working die. This area (the shield detail), would have a tough time striking up if it were already engraved on the MASTER die or hub. By engraving the working dies only, this, in effect, gives the halves the best and very best possible strike that could be achieved under pressure of the screw. That is the theory, and in my considered opinion, the "only logical one."

In closing, I would be very happy to personally hear from JRCS members concerning this subject - pro and con. Also in my past writings for the **JR Journal**, I have endeavored to bring out "things" about the old Capped Bust Halves that would stimulate further study and discussion - but those articles were not perfect and I wish to remind you that neither is this writer/researcher. However, I sincerely hope this article causes collectors to go far beyond the study/collecting of a year set, or Overton varieties, and seek out the still hidden secrets - those very "things" that make the actual collecting of these fine silver half dollars so very enjoyable.

Edgar E. Souders

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*** CHERRY PICKER ALERT ***

1806 O-127 COMES WITHOUT DIE BREAK

Tucson, Arizona dealer Elliot Goldman (Allstate Coins) is glad that he attended the Denver "Extravaganza" Show, May 12-15, 1988. When he returned to his store and laid out his new purchases he found an 1806 half dollar that looked nice but not "right." It didn't square with any of the descriptions in Overton's book. "Might as well check the Supplement," said Elliot, with a sigh of frustration.

Sure enough, there it was, an 1806 O-127, but without the 'diagnostic' die break through star 6. And a solid VF to boot! Knowing that I was the biggest fish west of the Atlantic, Elliot interrupted my preparations for the forthcoming H.W. Blevins Sale with a phone call.

When he assured me that his coin had no die break, I had to have it. Even if he had blown the attribution - and don't we all, more often than we care to admit - I would have good laugh on my buddy. Well, he had it right and I had the coin.

I took it to Long Beach, "for display only." Twenty minutes after arriving on June 1, 1988 I spotted a low grade 1806, with the Y in LIBERTY well above T. Could it be? Yep! Too easy though, there was a heavy die break through star 6. Bought the dog, i.e., choice AG, for \$45. Now I had a pair of O-127's, best known and worst known. Though spittle rained heavy across my bourse case, I refused all offers until after the Blevins' coins were sold. Both coins have since settled into new homes with eastern collectors.

Now that we know that the O-127 comes without a die break, a fact for which we should have been ready (anyone seen a "prime" example of the 1832 large letters, O-101?), how can we spot this obverse whilst picking cherries? I suggest that you focus on the TY relationship. The Y is well above T, top and bottom, noticeably higher than on any other marriage of 1806. If star 8 is weak and Miss LIBERTY's drapery lines are flatly struck, manufacture a yawn and reach for your wallet. Do check star positions and the reverse (no stems on berries) before shelling out the contents of your wallet. There are more of these around. The count now stands at nine or so, but only one "prime" E.D.S., without the die break.

Sheridan Downey III

SOME COMMENTS ON MARKET PRICES OF BUST HALF DOLLARS

I read with interest the 1988 MARKET UPDATE FOR BUST HALF DOLLARS which was presented by Sheridan Downey in Vol.3 No.1 of the **JR Journal**. It was an excellent effort, and up to the usual high standards we've come to expect from Sheridan. Having dealt quite heavily in bust halves for the past three years, I thought I would add some comments and other views on some of the thoughts and values presented.

One thing I have noticed is that, at least for bust halves, MS-60 as an effective grade has ceased to exist. Either the coin is AU-58 or it is MS-62 or better. If we are going to be conservative in our grading, then a coin which is a classic MS-60, full curl, no slide marks, etc. will be graded as MS-62 or better in today's market. This does not refer to a change of standards; rather with the advent of 'slabs' in the market, one must think of grading for value. 'Slabs' grade value. A true MS-60 coin is worth far more than MS-60 money, and thus in effect is MS-62 or better. One need only look at recent auctions where rare varieties or high grade bust halves were offered: Buddy Ebsen, 'Woody' Blevins, and most recently Bowers & Merena's Everson & Faught Sale, and the prices realized tell their own stories. High auction prices are the norm not just for Mint State pieces but for nice EF's and AU's.

I think Sheridan hit the nail on the head when he said that PCGS (for example) will grade a coin MS-62 overlooking a bit of slide or cabinet friction. 'Slabs' do grade value. In effect the market accepts a bit of slide or cabinet friction and accords those really super coins without any slide an accordingly higher value (and grade). In reality this is all quite appropriate.

The bottom line is very simple. Bust Halves are HOT! All nice original coins VF and better are really in demand. Originality and eye-appeal does, and should, add value to a coin. Nice EF-40 and EF-45 coins are getting very tough to find (especially before 1824) and demand premium prices. Major auctions featuring a nice run of bust halves (e.g. Everson & Faught, where most of the coins had been purchased before 1940 and had been off the market since then) tend to bring high prices for all grades EF-UNC.

Now to specifics. I reviewed the values listed in the UPDATE and can offer some comments based on my experiences. I guess I should consider myself somewhat lucky with regard to locating nice bust halves because where I happen to live (Baltimore) is just about the center of the circulation radius of bust halves. Thus this tends to be a fertile area for finding nice bust halves in their native habitat (in

contrast to major coin shows where the coins have already traded hands several times).

I think Sheridan is pretty much on the ball with regard to 1807's. People just don't tend to realize how scarce these coins are in higher grades. I would value the 1807 O-113 'Small Stars' higher than the 'Large Stars' based on what I have seen. The O-112 50/20 should not be sneezed at. Although most 1807's seen tend to be O-112s, you don't see many above VF condition. I think his values for this variety are correct and serve to underline the fact that "Trends" and the "Red Book" are underpriced. I would value 1808/7's higher, too. Although you tend to see this variety around, well-struck, original examples are definitely tough. I would value them easily \$50+ in each grade VF-30 through AU-50.

A comment on 1809's and 1810's. Several varieties are just plain weakly struck. Overton's photos and descriptions make this very plain (1809 O-103, 105, etc; 1810 O-101, 102, 103, etc.). Nice choice EF and AU specimens will have partly flat left wings, and on certain 1810's almost the entire left wing will be flat. While this is obvious and accepted by most, in the know, many date collectors want fully struck pieces, and on these dates this puts extra demand for those varieties which come well struck. Thus fully struck specimens demand a premium even if they are R-1, etc. Accordingly 1809's in fully struck EF-45 would merit a \$325-350 price and AU-50 coins \$450-500. 1810's in EF-45 \$275-300 and AU-50's \$400-500. No mention is made of the experimental edge varieties of 1809. Breen in his new "Encyclopedia" notes that these command a 10-20% premium. I've found that higher grade specimens with edge varieties command a heftier premium, while lower grade specimens (under VF) command no premium at all. The 'XXX' edge is considerably scarcer than the 'III' edge.

I would put higher premiums on popular "Red Book" varieties, especially in the earlier dates. Thus the 18.11 should bring more than shown and does bring more than the 'Large 8' variety. The 'Small 8' is obviously much more plentiful and thus prices should reflect this. In MS-60 and above the 18.11 is much rarer. The Everson & Fraught specimen graded MS-60 (but a truly magnificent coin) brought \$4,000. I see higher values on 1812/1; 1813 50C./UNI; 1814/3, etc. Interestingly enough, I tend to see a lot of the 1814 E/A in STATES variety, but not in really nice grade. Given the state of the reverse die on this variety any piece that has a lot of detail on the left wing is RARE. I have never seen one that didn't have a flat head on the eagle. The 1814/3 is much scarcer than people tend to think, and I think undervalued. The 1814 'Single Leaf' is very very scarce; I don't see many and I would value it a lot higher. It is surely much scarcer than 1814/3 and very popular. In EF-40 this coin is worth closer to \$425 and goes up from there. You just don't see these around.

For the early dates (just as years, not varieties or overdates), I would list them (in descending order of scarcity) 1815, 1807, 1814, 1808, 1817, 1809, 1811, 1813, 1812, and 1818. This is based on what I see locally and others may want to change a few around. One thing is for sure: of the teens (1815 notwithstanding) the 1814's and 1817's are the scarce ones.

The 1817/3 is becoming increasingly popular. I think the UPDATE is off by \$125 per grade VF-30 to EF-45. When do you ever see them in EF? A few have been offered in major auctions in AU-55 and up, but otherwise you see them below EF-40. It wouldn't surprise me if someone starts hoarding these, if they haven't already.

1818/7 and 1819/8 are common overdates but the 1819/8 is more common. Decent 1818/7's are tough - the face is always flatly struck on these and when you can find one well struck it is worth a good premium. The 1819/8 comes well struck. I like 1820/19's and 1820's. So do a lot of people. Decent, well struck coins are tough and in demand. 1821's are undervalued by the general dealer - public. Sheridan has noted the scarcity. 1822's and 1823's are scarce, too, but not to the extent of 1821's.

The later dates tend to be pretty much available in all grades. I personally think the 1824/1 is much, much scarcer than 1824/4's or other 1824 varieties. Too many dealers mis-attribute the 1824/4's and call them 1824/1's. Sharp EF's of the 1824/various dates (I prefer 1824/2/0) are very scarce. When you find these (and they are not rare) they are usually VF. Decent 1827/6's are getting tough to find and they are by no means as common as 1819/8's.

Personally, I find the 1832 'Large Letters' variety to be scarcer than Sheridan thinks. Nice examples (EF and better, with luster and a bold die break) are worth more than he suggests. It is very popular. The first MARKET PRICES article, published last year (Vol.1 No.3), noted that unattributed examples of both 1836 50/00 and 1836/1336 can be found on most bourse floors. While I tend to agree with regard to the 1836/1336; I have yet to find even one unattributed 50/00.

I would be interested in the opinions of others. I am a firm believer in the real value of these coins, especially the early dates. Really nice, attractive, eye-appealing pieces are SUPER scarce and don't hang around long in a dealer's inventory. The interest generated by these coins just reflect what a bargain they really are in the world of MS-65 Morgan Dollars, etc. While the market can collapse (and has) with regard to dollars, Walkers, and other promoted 20th Century issues, bust halves have continued to increase in value, steadily and consistently.

Mark Hotz

NEW BOOK ON REEDED EDGE HALF DOLLARS

A new book has been written listing die varieties of the Reeded Edge Half Dollars. The previous work was done by M.L. Beistle in 1829. It lists 37 varieties. The new book lists 58 varieties.

The Reeded Edge Half Dollars represent a major change in the minting process for U.S. coins. With the use of the first steam press by the Mint in 1836, many other changes were made. For the first time, dies were made from a master hub which contained everything on the die except the date. All of the dies made from one hub were practically identical. The only differences were file marks, engravers scratches, die cracks, rim breaks, or other damage to the dies.

Christian Gobrecht was the chief Engraver during this period, and it seems that he was a man with many ideas. Using reeded instead of lettered edges, for example, eliminated one entire operation in the manufacturing process. The blanks for the lettered edge coins were put through a Castaing machine. This was not required for the reeded edges.

Some of the new ideas were not perfect. With the old method of die preparation, a sharp center punch was used to place a center dot in the die. This appeared on the coin as a small dot. When the same process was used on the hub, a larger punch was used, forming a small depressed circle on the finished coin.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first one describes each variety. The second lists all of the defects noted for each year, and tells which variety has that defect. To attribute coins with the book, a half should be checked for any defects. Look for that defect in the second section, Appendix A. There you should find listed one or two varieties containing that particular defect.

The new book is the third in a series of VIM's on early silver coinage, written by Jules Reiver. The title is VARIETY IDENTIFICATION MANUAL FOR REEDED EDGE HALF DOLLARS - 1836-1839. The book has 60 pages, and is soft bound. It can be purchased from:

Jules Reiver
1802 Forrest Road
Wilmington, DE 19810

or from many of the larger coin dealers. The price is \$10.00.

CONDITION CENSUS

Capped Bust Half Dimes 1829 - 1837

Because of their lack of popularity with the public during the 19th century, many higher grade half dimes were saved from circulation. And since Bust Half Dime varieties have been studied and identified for over 50 years, many exceptional variety collections have been assembled and disbursed.

In view of these facts, it seems incredible that during this past year there have been more new varieties discovered in this series than in all the other Federal copper and silver series combined! It is amazing that this has happened. But it is probably because more collectors are attributing coins before purchasing them and are sharing their findings with their fellow collectors. It is this habit which we wish to foster and enhance by compiling and publishing the third **JR Journal** census.

When Daniel Valentine published his half dime manuscript in 1931, he described 69 different Capped Bust Half Dime varieties. Although his die descriptions leave a bit to be desired by today's standards, they were accurate enough to enable modern collectors to identify all of the varieties.

Walter Breen's 1958 monograph published in the Coin Collectors Journal describes seven additional varieties, one which is only recognized as a die state (1834 B-6) today. David Davis' supplement to the Quarterman 1975 reprint lists an additional seven varieties and again, one (1834 B-7) is only recognized as a die state. Jules Reiver's Variety Identification Manual published in 1984 and David Davises' ANS 1986 COAC paper describe an additional six varieties and, finally, with the two recent discoveries the total count is 89.

The most comprehensive collection ever to be sold at auction was dispersed in May 1977 by RARCOA at the Central States Numismatic Convention. Although it has long been referred to as the "Freeman Sale," the bust half dimes were the collection of Stewart P. Witham. Stew assembled an outstanding collection of the highest caliber, numbering a total of 80 varieties (83 known at the time of the sale) with an average condition of 58.425! With Stew's permission, I have listed his collection as it was catalogued by RARCOA but with one addition. Stew also owned a F-15 example of 1829 V-10 which was holed!

ANS has again consented to have their reference collection listed in our census. We thank them for their cooperation.

The next census will be the pre-turban half dollars, providing we get some more input. And after that will be the Bust Dollars. So please send your pre-turb half dollar and dollar censuses to P.O. Box 205, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. If anyone wishes his collection to be identified by something other than his JRCS number, please ask and I can arrange that.

Russell J. Logan

CAPPED BUST HALF DIMES

Jul-88

	V	R#	006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX
1829	1	5	25	25	30	50	30		45		50	40	40						37	50
	2	2	30	40	45	65	15	20	55	55	50	25	25			50			40	65
	3	1	40	40	30	67	30	40	45	45	50	25		40	55				42	67
	4	5	40	40	50	65	45	40	60	45			25	45					46	65
	5	6	40	40	40	65													46	65
	6	1	30	25	55	60	12	30	50	40	45	40	25	45	30		30		37	60
	7	3	40	50	45	67	40	40	45	55	45		50	40	50				47	67
	8	4	30	40	45	60	45	40	50	12									40	60
	9	3	12	40	20	60			30			10							29	60
	10	7	15	40	50	8	12		45										28	50
	11	6	50	40	8	30			45						20		30		32	50
	12	2	50	40	50	55	60	25	25	35	40	25	50	50	55	40			43	60
	13	3	30	40	30	50	20	15	30	50			15						31	50
	14	2	55	40	55	65	6	40	40	12	45								40	65
	15	4	20	25	20	60	30		45			25	40						33	60
	16	7	15	40	50				40										36	50
	17	8																	??	??
Discovery piece																				
1830	1	3	45	25	50	65	20	50	50	35		25							41	65
	2	3	40	25	45	60	45	12	45	30	55				55	60		40	43	60
	3	2	50	25	55	60	12	40		60		40	40	30	55		35		42	60
	4	7	20	25		60	8												28	60
	5	6	45	40	60	60	30	50			40			15		45		25	41	60
	6	1	55	25	50	65	30	50	40	45		40	15	45					42	65
	7	2	40	40	40	55	12	40	50	50	50		25	45		50			41	55
	8	2	40	40	55	60	30	40	45	45	45		50	50		45			45	60
	9	3	55	50	40	65	12	12	30	25	40	25	50						37	65
	10	4	55	40	50	30	12	50		45	45	45	25			45			40	55
	11	4	60	40	45	65	4	40		40								45	42	65
	12	8		63							30								47	63
	13	7	60		50														55	60
1831	1	2	60	25	40	65	40	25	40	40	55	40		10	55	45	15	25	39	65
	2	4	55	40	55	50	30	40		40			40	50				35	44	55
	3	2	60	50	50	65	15	40	45			50							47	65
	4	2	15	25	55	50	40	45	40	35		40	40						39	55
	5	1	55	40	30	65	30	40	30	50	45	40		40	55		45		43	65
	6	1	50	40	40	65	45	30	30	45	45	40					12		40	65
	7	3	40	40	50	55	20	40	40	40	30	25	45			63			41	63
	V	R#	006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX

CAPPED BUST HALF DIMES

Jul -88

	V	R#	006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX
1832	1	1	60	40	30	60	45	45	50	63	45	25		45				15	44	63
	2	2	50	40	50	55	10	40	40	50	40	40	25	25	50				40	55
	3	3	40	40	25	60	55	20	55	50	45					55			45	60
	4	6	20	50	40				40	40									38	50
	5	3	50	40	30	65	60	40	45	45	45		50	40			12		44	65
	6	4	55	40	40	55	45	20		20	45	40	40	40					40	55
	7	6	30	40	15	45	40			35								15	31	45
	8	1	45	50	40	60	55	30	40	40	40	40	40	45	55				45	60
	9	2	60	25	55	60	40	30	45	50	30	25	15	40		40			40	60
	10	4	40	40	40	55	20	30	55					25			20		36	55
	11	6	30	50	12	60	60		25										40	60
	12	4	60	40	50	65	60	50	50	40	40								51	65
	13	3	60	25	55	65			50	15									45	65
	14	7	40	45		65	8			45									41	65
1833	1	1	55	40	50	50	50	50	40	40	45	25	25	40					43	55
	2	3	40	40	40	65	40	50						50	50				47	65
	3	2	40	50	55	50	20	45			25	40							41	55
	4	2	65	25	45	67	60	50	30	30		40		45		45		45	46	67
	5	2	50	25	45	65	20	20	40	25	55		25						37	65
	6	2	60	40	40	65	8	50	40	50		40	25	40			20		40	65
	7	3	50	40	45	60	8	30		40	45		40	6				20	35	60
	8	7	45	25		45		30					63			63			45	63
	9	7	60		45														53	60
	10	8																	Discovery piece	??
1834	1	1	45	40	45	65	40	40	40	55	40	25		50	55				45	65
	2	4	60	40	55	60	4	40		10			25	15			20		35	60
	3	3	35	40	40	60	25		30		45								39	60
	4	1	60	40	40	65	30	50	30	50	25	40	50	50		65		30	45	65
	5	2	55	40	50	65	4	40	50	35	45			40	45	50			43	65
1835	1	4	50	40	40	50	30	40	50	60	45		40						45	60
	2	2	55	40	55	65	30	40	45	30	30	25		25	40				40	65
	3	1	50	40	45	65	40	40	40	40	25	25	25	25		45	20		38	65
	4	3	40	25	50	45	30	40		45	25								38	50
	5	2	40	40	40	50	30	55	30	45	45	40	25	40	40	55		45	41	55
	6	2	40	40	45	65	20	15	55	8	45		25	40			45		37	65
	7	1	63	45	45	65	20	40	45	63	45	40	40	40	55	60	20		46	65
	8	6	45	15	50	65	12		40		50		10				10		33	65
	9	1	60	40	45	65	12	30	30	30	30	50		6	50		20		36	65
	10	3	40	25	50	60	8	50	45	50	45					55			43	60
	11	3	50	25	40	65	12	40	40	25		25		45	50			10	36	65
1836	1	3	45	40	45	50	30	40		10	30		50						38	50
	2	2	55	25	45	65	30	40	45	40	40	40		30	45		12		39	65
	3	2	65	40	40	60	12	20	45	50	40	10	25	30					41	65
	4	1	50	40	45	60	50	40	55	40	40	40		45	55	45	30		45	60
	5	6	55	45	65	60	20			25			50					25	43	65
	6	2	63	25	50	65	40	20	50	45	35	40	25	25	50	55		40	42	65
	7	5	40	40	40	50	25		50	55			25						41	55
	V	R#	006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX

CAPPED BUST HALF DIMES

Jul-88

	V	R#	006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX
1837	1	1	45	25	25	45	12	30	45	50	30	25	15	45	50				34	50
	2	3	50	25	25	65	20	30	45	35					40	40	30		37	65
	3	1	40	40	30	55	30	30	40	45	40	50	25	30		50	20	25	37	55
	4	6	30	40	45		20		50	20	15								31	50
	5	7	35	50			10	8	45	50									33	50

89 Known			006	002	003	SPW	010	008	001	012	169	011	013	ANS	068	329	326	131	AVG	MAX
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COINS OWNED			86	85	82	80	77	66	66	65	52	42	42	41	24	23	18	16		89
AVG GRADE			44	37	43	58	28	36	43	40	41	34	33	37	51	51	41	38		KNOWN
																				VARIETIES

R# 16			16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	15	16	9	15	9	5	8	3		
1			50	38	40	61	33	38	41	46	39	36	29	39	51	53	25	23		

R# 22			22	22	22	22	22	22	20	20	17	16	14	16	9	10	5	4		
2			46	35	48	61	25	35	43	40	42	35	30	35	48	48	25	39		

R# 18			18	18	18	18	16	15	14	14	10	6	7	5	5	5	2	3		
3			42	35	40	60	28	34	41	36	43	23	43	36	49	55	21	23		

R# 10			10	10	10	10	10	9	5	8	4	3	6	3	0	1	2	2		
4			49	39	44	55	28	39	50	33	44	37	35	38	0	45	20	40		

R# 3			3	3	3	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0		
5			35	35	40	55	33	40	52	50	50	40	30	45	0	0	0	0		

R# 9			9	9	9	7	6	1	5	3	4	0	2	1	1	1	1	4		
6			38	40	37	55	30	50	40	27	36	0	30	15	20	45	10	24		

R# 8			8	6	4	4	4	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0		
7			36	38	49	45	10	19	43	48	0	0	63	0	0	63	0	0		

R# 3			0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
8			0	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

One of our charter members sent me an old post card he received from Al Overton. It is postmarked July 6, 1964, and I thought I would share the advertisement with you.

Now available for immediate
delivery Beistle's Register of Half
Dollar Die Varieties and Sub-
Varieties. Postpaid-----\$9.50.

Overton Coin Co.
P. O. Box 893
Pueblo, Colorado

ANOTHER NEW HALF DIME VARIETY - 1829 V-17

The half dime collectors are doing their homework. It is nice to know we have serious collectors who check their coins completely. First, we had Dr. Eric Gutscher with his new 1801 V-3, then Howard Barron and Tom Holland with the 1833 V-10, and now Alan Bricker, of Baltimore, MD, with a new variety of 1829, V-17. When you take into account the fact that 1801 has three varieties, the total of known Bust Half Dime varieties becomes 120.

Alan was checking an 1829 half dime, using my VARIETY IDENTIFICATION MANUAL FOR UNITED STATES HALF DIMES, 1794 - 1837 (VIM), when he hit paydirt. Following the suggested procedure, he first checked the reverse of the coin. It had the reverse of V-4 and 5. Since V-4 is more common, he checked that obverse first. The relationship of stars 1, 7 and 8 to the dentils seemed to be correct, or almost so. S13, however, pointed to the lower part of a dentil instead of to the upper part, as it should on a V-4.

Alan then checked the obverse against V-5. It is very simple. V-5 has the obverse used on six varieties, with the top of the 1 in the date doubled. The 1 was perfect, and this coin could not be a V-5.

The obverse was then checked against the other 1829 descriptions. When he came to V-3, he knew he had found the right one. S1 pointed to a dentil which is joined to the next one. This is probably where the engraver began adding the dentils, and didn't finish properly aligned.

The other stars pointed to the correct positions on the dentils, and everything else checked out.

So the numismatic world has, yet, another new half dime die variety, 1829 V-17. It is a combination of Valentine's Obverse-3 and Reverse-4. Alan brought the coin to Wilmington, where we checked it thoroughly and photographed it.

Congratulations, Alan Bricker. If anyone has comments on this or any other half dime variety, please contact me. (see address page 34)

Jules Reiver



1800 V-3 HALF DIME

I attended the January Long Beach (California) Coin Show and as usual walked straight over to Jim McGuigan to discuss the vicissitudes of the silly coin market. Upon arriving at his table, he said another 1800 V-3 half dime had popped up and if I was interested he would locate it. After picking up my senses and realizing that this was one of those "automatic buy" varieties that I had never been offered in ten years of variety collecting I sent Jim out to find the coin. Upon his return, with the coin, and my examination of it I remembered that Jules Reiver needed this variety. Jim said he had asked Julian Leidman about it and when Julian checked Jules want list he saw that it was not listed. What had happened is that Jules had decided that the variety didn't exist since he had never seen one or heard of one other than the reference in the Valentine reprint of 1975. Jules had recently dropped the variety from his want list.

After purchasing the coin, I called Jules and he said that he had never seen one, so I sent it off to him and it now resides in his collection.

Jules has taken some beautiful pictures of the coin with the spectacular obverse die break, or perhaps internal cud, as I call this break. I have never seen similar die breaks on any coin. The die must have developed parallel obverse die cracks which rapidly sunk the cud portion of the obverse die, leaving 75% of the coin strong and the very right edge and parts of three stars even stronger. The sunken portion of the die did not



strike up strongly at all or was struck so weakly that the design was quickly worn away being as it was the "highest" part of the coin.

I have never seen this variety offered in any auction and had never heard of this variety other than the Valentine book. I personally had my doubts as to its existence simply because I had never seen one and Jules had never seen one. The coin is obviously rare and a logical explanation for its rarity is the terminal obverse break which quickly rendered the obverse die useless. The reverse die used is the common V-1 and V-2 reverse.

I started asking other dealers about the variety, and one said that he had seen an uncirculated coin with the die breaks. It was sold in the mid 1960's and probably resides in the same collection. He thought the purchaser was a date collector and not interested in varieties. He also stated that there are a few other others, but none had turned up in the last several years.

I would be pleased if someone else had a logical explanation for this type of die break. I have seen several coins with bisecting die breaks, a few with parallel die cracks, but nothing like this 1800 V-3 half dime with what amounts to an internal cud break.

James M. Matthews

MEMBER'S MARKETPLACE

WANTED: Bust Halves, VF to BU. Collector paying dealer buy price. No cleaned or problem coins. Please ship to: Ray Anderson, P.O. Box 2529, Umatilla, Florida 32784.

WANTED: Bust Halves, 1794-1795 G-VF. 1801-07 F-VF, 1807-36 VF-AU+ (especially need R-5 and better varieties).

SELLING: I have an extensive list of coins. Please write. Bust Half Quotes by Fricke (BHQP) 1989 subscription \$14.95. Pierre Fricke, Box 1716, Round Rock, Texas 78680.

CORRECTIONS: In Vol.3 No.1 there are some errors in the census on page 33. Member 002 (4th column) owns a B-3 in F-12 and a B-8 in VF-30. Secondly, the 1835 B-3 VF-15 and B-8 VF-35 listed under member 012 should be moved one column to the right and belong to member 014. -Editor.

